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13. — *The Buccaneers, or the Monarchs of the Main.* By WALTER THORNBURY, ESQ. London. 1858. 12mo. pp. 455.

THE amount of fantastic gilding on the back and covers of this volume almost discouraged us from opening it; nor were we quite reassured by the grotesque and startling illustrations. But we ventured upon the text, and were well repaid. Mr. Thornbury in this compilation has given us a work of real value. He has derived it from sources which have heretofore been slightly explored, and has drawn from these sources most skilfully and judiciously. Not only has he studied the writers of *voyages*, such as Dampier, Cowley, and Burney, and the works of the priests Charlevoix, Du Terke, and Labat, but he has condensed for us the important details of the Buccaneer writers themselves, Oexmelin and Esquemeling. He corrects at the outset the false notion that these two writers are one and the same, and shows that the differences of the narratives are much greater than the difference in their names. The one is a Dutchman, the other a Frenchman.

Three classes of men are described in the preliminary chapters, the hunters, the planters, and the "flibustiers," or sea-rovers of the West Indies. The manners, morals, labor, and spirit of these classes prepare us for the sketches of individuals and of special enterprises which follow. No less than thirty-six of the Buccaneer chiefs come under review, and of some of them, especially of Peter the Great, Morgan, Montbaro, and Montauban, we have almost a biography. The details of the volume, though sufficiently horrible, are less revolting than the subject might lead us to expect. Mr. Thornbury is not an artist of the Harrison Ainsworth school, nor does he delight to praise the bloody exploits of pirates, or to set forth as virtuous the outrages of plunderers. His characters do not become heroes, though he gladly exhibits, as a relief to their villainies, the occasional instances of their humanity and honor. His book is a history, not a romance. It will probably supply material for a multitude of romances, both French and English. It is a pity that it was not published before the author of "Lafitte" was compelled to take orders and write Scriptural love-stories, in default of any more piratical legends. Such a novelist as Dumas would get a whole volume out of many single paragraphs in Mr. Thornbury's work; such as the account of Morgan's interview with the Spanish lady, who was convinced *by his oaths* that he had heard of a God, and that the Buccaneers were not all atheists and wild beasts, as was currently reported of them. The whole story of the conquest of Panama is exceedingly graphic.

The volume has two very provoking and unaccountable defects. It is without any map of the region of sea and land on which the exploits that it records were performed. In such a work a map is absolutely essential, and is worth a hundred "illustrations by Phiz." And it is without any index or table of contents. We hope that in a second edition these defects may be remedied; and that any American publisher who may re-issue the work will copy nothing but the text of the English edition, — not its plates nor its binding.

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14. — *Oriental and Western Siberia: a Narrative of Seven Years' Explorations and Adventures in Siberia, Mongolia, the Kirghis Steppes, Chinese Tartary, and Part of Central Asia.* By THOMAS WITLAM ATKINSON. With a Map and numerous Illustrations. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1858. 8vo. pp. 533.

FROM the rare opportunities of this author, his long stay in the region which he describes, and the novelty of the subject itself, this book of Siberian travel ought to be exceedingly interesting. But there are several hinderances to our pleasure in reading it. The egotism of the writer is intense and intolerable. The pronoun of the first person singular, in all its inflexions, is omnipresent, and "I," "my," and "me" stud the pages like stars in a cloudless sky. In modesty Mr. Atkinson is the reverse of Dr. Livingstone, and he never fails to tell all the valiant and remarkable deeds that he did, might have done, or came near doing. The real merit of his exploits needed not such excess of personal parade. The style of the volume is loose, incorrect, and singularly inartistic, when we consider that the writer is an artist by profession. However skilful he may be with the pencil, he does not produce pen-pictures of more than mediocre value. Describing scenery so fine that it can be characterized only by superlatives, he never renders his descriptions graphic, or enables us by his word to see the beauty he praises. He makes the mountains, the glens, the waterfalls, the caverns, very commonplace and tiresome, and he succeeds best when he states facts, and spares us his impressions. There is a strange want of proportion and fitness in his details. He evidently was tired of his work long before he finished it, and he despatches the last and most important half of his journey in a few closing pages, in the most careless manner. What we want most to know, the manners, temper, local prejudices, laws, and religion of the various tribes, and their relations to one another and to the Russian government, we fail in great measure to learn here. The accounts of mining in the Ural and the Altai